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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

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Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

II. Measures taken at the national and international levels regarding the prevention and suppression of international terrorism, and information on incidents caused by international terrorism

A. Information received from Member States

Switzerland

1. Switzerland was a party to 16 universal counter-terrorism instruments. In December 2014, it had ratified the Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Relating to International Civil Aviation of 2010 and the Protocol Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft of 2010. Switzerland was also a party to the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism of 1977, and it had signed but not yet ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism of 2005. On 22 October 2015, it had also signed the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism of 2015, which concerns foreign terrorist fighters. Switzerland also cooperated with other countries in the fight against terrorism within the framework of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000. In addition, Switzerland had concluded a number of bilateral police and customs cooperation agreements that were also relevant to the fight against terrorism.

2. In January 2015, a new federal law banning the groups Al-Qaida and Islamic State and related organizations entered into force, replacing previous applicable

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legislation. The new law proscribed any form of support, propaganda and recruitment for the two organizations in Switzerland and abroad. A bill concerning intelligence was also introduced in February 2014 and would be subject to a referendum in September 2016. If it became law in 2017, as envisaged, it would provide a new legal framework for the Swiss Federal Intelligence Service, including in matters concerning terrorism, espionage and the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Other changes in national law concerning surveillance and data communication were being planned. Furthermore, in September 2015, Switzerland had adopted a federal strategy in the fight against terrorism. At the strategic level, a task force had been established (Terrorist Travellers) for the coordination of all federal counter-terrorism activities. Switzerland also supported the United Nations activities concerning the prevention of violent extremism and it had adopted a Foreign Policy Action Plan on Preventing Violent Extremism in April 2016. In addition, Switzerland was the host country of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, a key element of the global action against radicalization. In April 2015, Switzerland had launched an initiative to highlight the importance of the human rights of children in the fight against terrorism, within the framework of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, leading to a set of recommendations that would be proposed for adoption in 2016.

3. Many Swiss citizens had been victims of acts linked to terrorism in 2015 and 2016, including two Swiss soldiers injured during the attack by Al Mourabitoun in a restaurant in Bamako in March 2015, three Swiss citizens injured during the attacks in Paris, in November 2015, which were claimed by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, a Swiss woman kidnapped by Al-Qaida in Timbuktu (Mali) in January 2016 and who had not yet been freed despite repeated requests for her unconditional release, and two Swiss citizens killed in Ouagadougou during the attack by Al Mourabitoun in a hotel in January 2016.

4. In 2015, financial intermediaries had communicated 38 cases of presumed financing of terrorism to the competent authorities on money-laundering, a net increase from the previous year. Those communications revealed a number of specific cases amounting to around 32 million Swiss francs. Sixteen of the 38 communications had led to the transmission to the competent authorities for criminal prosecution. While one case had already been the object of a decision by the prosecuting authorities, the others were still being evaluated by them.

5. As part of an investigation started in 2009, in 2014 the Swiss federal criminal prosecution authorities, in close collaboration with other countries, had continued their investigations of various individuals suspected of supporting an ethnonationalist group. Indications at the time of reporting were that they had built a pyramid structure in Switzerland that was being used, inter alia, for the covert collection of funds to support the group. The investigation was scheduled to reach a formal accusation stage in July 2016. In 2015, criminal authorities had also continued their investigations into foreign terrorist fighters travelling to the Syrian Arab Republic, and 20 criminal procedures had been initiated in this respect during the year. Furthermore, investigations were ongoing concerning recruitment and support for Al-Shabaab activities in Somalia. Investigations were also continuing concerning the Internet activities of terrorist organizations.

6. In February 2016, the Federal Tribunal of Lausanne had affirmed the 2014 conviction by the Federal Criminal Tribunal of two Iraqi citizens for their online

propaganda activities in favour of Al-Qaida. In March 2016, the Federal Criminal Tribunal convicted three Iraqi citizens for having supported and participated in a criminal organization under article 260 *ter* of the Swiss Criminal Code by forming a cell of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant operating in Switzerland.

7. In 2014 and 2015, 31 requests for judicial cooperation in relation to terrorism had been received by Switzerland, 22 of which had been executed. In the same period, Swiss authorities had sent 51 requests for judicial cooperation to other countries, 38 of which had been executed. Switzerland had also received several extradition requests. In addition, the Swiss federal police had issued a number of individual refusals of entry in the Swiss territory for reasons linked to terrorism. Procedures had also been initiated to seek the revoking of citizenship of a person suspected of having joined a terrorist organization in the Syrian Arab Republic.